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TUESDAY, JULY 31, 2007  
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## **OHIO MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO CONSPIRACY TO PROVIDE MATERIAL SUPPORT TO TERRORISTS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – An Ohio man has pleaded guilty to conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, Assistant Attorney General for National Security Kenneth L. Wainstein, U.S. Attorney Gregory G. Lockhart of the Southern District of Ohio, FBI Deputy Assistant Director, Counterterrorism Division, Arthur M. Cummings, and Julie L. Myers, Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), announced today.

Nuradin M. Abdi, 35, a Somali national living in Columbus, Ohio, was named in a four-count indictment returned under seal in the U.S. District Court in Columbus on June 10, 2004. This afternoon, Abdi pleaded guilty in federal court to Count One of the indictment, which charged him with conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, in violation of 18 U.S.C. 2339A. Abdi agreed to serve a 10-year prison sentence pursuant to the terms of his plea agreement.

Count One of the indictment specifically alleged that on April 27, 1999, Abdi applied to the Immigration and Naturalization Service - now known as ICE - for a travel document, wherein he concealed his destination by representing that he intended to visit Germany and Saudi Arabia for the purpose of "Umrah (Holly[sic] - Mecca) and visit my relative," when he actually planned to travel to Ogaden, Ethiopia, for the purpose of obtaining military-style training in preparation for violent jihad. Abdi allegedly sought training in radio usage, guns, guerilla warfare and bombs.

"Today's case should serve notice to those who would take advantage of our country's freedoms to support and conspire with international terrorists who are our sworn enemies," said Assistant Attorney General Wainstein.

"This plea is the product of a persistent global investigation by agents and officers who used every legal tool available to document the actions of one who conspired to aid terrorists," U.S. Attorney Lockhart said.

"While living in our country, Nuradin M. Abdi endangered the national security of the United States by conspiring to provide support to terrorists," said FBI Deputy Assistant Director Cummings. "Let there be no mistake, the FBI will work tirelessly with

our partners in the law enforcement and intelligence communities to pursue suspected terrorists and their supporters and disrupt their criminal activities.”

“This case demonstrates ICE’s efforts to help prevent acts of terrorism through the aggressive enforcement of our immigration laws,” said ICE Assistant Secretary Myers. “Obtaining immigration benefits through document fraud is a serious threat to public safety and national security. ICE is committed to continuing to work with our law enforcement partners to safeguard against those seeking to exploit the immigration system to support terrorist activity.”

According to the statement of facts agreed upon by the government and the defendant, Abdi first entered the United States in 1995 using a false passport. He once again illegally entered the United States from Canada in 1997. Abdi was later granted asylum in this country based on a series of false statements.

In the ensuing years, Abdi befriended co-conspirators Christopher Paul and Iyman Faris in Ohio. Christopher Paul was later arrested and indicted in April 2007 on charges of providing material support, conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, and conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction (explosives) in the Southern District of Ohio. Iyman Faris was later convicted of providing material support and conspiracy to provide material support to Al Qaeda. He is currently serving a 20-year prison term.

In 1999, the defendant made plans to travel to overseas training camps to prepare himself for violent jihad. He initially sought to go to Kosovo, then changed plans in favor of Chechnya, and later planned to attend a training camp in Ethiopia that he had heard of. In 2000, Abdi traveled to Kenya and learned that the Ethiopian camp no longer existed. He then went on to Somalia, where he met with a warlord associated with Islamic extremists. Abdi returned to the United States in March 2000.

According to the statement of facts, Abdi told FBI agents that in August 2002 he proposed a plot to bomb a shopping mall. Abdi was later provided with compact discs containing instructions on how to make explosives. In Dec. 2002, Faris described to Abdi a potential plot to launch missile attacks against various landmarks in Washington, D.C.

Shortly after these discussions, Faris was taken into custody and began making statements to the FBI. Federal agents arrested Abdi on Nov. 28, 2003. Abdi subsequently agreed to be interviewed by FBI agents and admitted conspiring with Faris, Paul and others to provide material support to foreign terrorists. These admissions by Abdi have been corroborated in a variety of ways, including bank records, travel records, invoices, and items seized in search warrants.

This case was investigated by the Southern Ohio Joint Terrorism Task Force, a multi-agency operation that includes agents and officers from 15 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

The investigation was a joint investigation by agents and officers of the JTTF, specifically ICE Special Agents Bob Medellin and Rich Wilkens; and FBI Special Agents Steve Flowers and John Corbin.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Dana M. Peters and Robyn J. Hahnert from the Southern District of Ohio and Sylvia Kaser, Trial Attorney with the Department of Justice's Counterterrorism Section.

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